

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of September 18, 2008 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. However, the Examiner is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,642,346 to Janes, *et al.* (hereinafter Janes) in view of U.S. Patent 7,212,996 to Carnahan, *et al.* (hereinafter Carnahan), and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,491,795 to Beaudet, *et al.* (hereinafter Beaudet) and U.S. Published Patent Application 2003/0046289 to Balasubramanian (hereinafter Balasubramanian). Claims 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Janes and Carnahan in view of Beaudet and Balasubramanian, and further in view of U.S. Published Patent Application 2004/0119743 to Xu (hereinafter Xu).

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections, Applicants have amended Claims 1-2 and 8. As discussed herein, the claim amendments are fully supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by the claim amendments.

Certain Aspects Of The Invention

It may be useful to reiterate certain aspects of Applicants' invention prior to addressing the cited references. One embodiment of the invention, as typified by Claim 1, is a method for conducting business-to-business (B2) transactions.

The method can include determining one or more e-commerce partners. After determining one or more e-commerce partners, a further step can be performed with

respect to each e-commerce partner so as to determine whether one or more of the e-commerce partners is an active partner based on at least one predetermined criteria. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0023], lines 4-7 ; see also paragraph [0039], lines 2-4.)

More particularly, the determination of whether the e-commerce partner is an active partner can be made on the basis of one or more of the following steps, each based on a corresponding criterion: detecting whether a transaction has occurred with the e-commerce partner within a designated time period; determining whether transactions involving the e-commerce partner exceed a designated valuation threshold; determining whether a transaction involving the e-commerce partner exceeds a designated data size; and determining whether the e-commerce partner has a preference level above a designated preference level. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0024], lines 1-13.) Moreover, the criteria for determining whether an e-commerce partner is an active partner can be adjustable. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0010], lines 12-14.)

The method also can include presenting a partner identifier as an expandable partner node within a commerce graphical user interface for the e-commerce partner if it is determined that the e-commerce partner is an active partner; and when the partner node is expanded, presenting at least one transaction identifier and any transaction error as a child node of the expanded partner node, wherein each transaction identifier represents an electronic commerce transaction between a user of the commerce graphical user interface and the e-commerce partner. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0041], lines 1-7.)

The method further can include categorizing a node associated with at least one of a transmission and an e-commerce partner; visually differentiating the node from other nodes at the same node level and at a different node level based upon a category of the node; and assigning responsible personnel to transactions based on predetermined rules. The predetermined rules are adjustable. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraphs [0020] and [0025]; see also original Claim 12).

The Claims Define Over The Cited References

It was asserted in the last paragraph on page 6 of the Office Action that Janes teaches that display of active partners to be those customers with orders (col. 8, lines 19-21), which must have occurred within a designated time period which could be indefinite for that order to have been made.

As already discussed in the previous responses, identifying whether or not a customer has an order within an indefinite time period basically means that all customers with orders are displayed regardless when the orders were placed. This will not achieve the object of the present invention, namely preventing clutter by establishing certain criteria so that electronic transaction administrators can focus more particularly on important transactions and e-commerce partners (see Specification, paragraph [0039]). In the present invention only partners who have had transactions within certain time period (such as 72 hours) are displayed. An indefinite time period cannot be considered as a designated or predetermined time period.

Similarly, since Janes displays all customers with orders (col. 8, lines 19-21), there is no preference level. It is noted that by definition a customer is one that purchases a commodity or service (see Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary) and thus with an order. Therefore, Applicants believe that Janes also does not disclose "determining whether said e-commerce partner has a preference level above a designated preference level," as recited in Claim 1 of the instant application.

It is also noted that Janes does not refer to a method for conducting B2B transactions. Rather, Janes is about an application to track livestock orders. Janes does not possess any of the characteristics of a B2B gateway (which encompass inbound and outbound transactions, in conformance with a standard like EDI, AS2, etc.).

The other cited references do not make up for the deficiencies of Janes.

It is further noted that none of the cited references discloses presenting any transaction error as a child node of the expanded partner node, as recited in amended Claim 1 of the instant application.

It is additionally noted that none of the cited references discloses that the predetermined rules for assigning responsible personnel to transactions are adjustable.

Regarding Balasubramanian, it is noted that Balasubramanian refers to allocation of processes to software agents, not human agents ("responsible personnel") in the sense of the present invention.

Regarding Xu, it is noted that paragraph 0094 of Xu describes a function whereby the user is simply allowed to choose/record a method of contact after-the-fact, from a drop-down list. Xu does not allow the user to actually perform any of these functions. In contrast, the present invention contemplates allowing the user to actually create an instant messaging-style chat session.

Accordingly, the cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest each and every element of Claim 1, as amended. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 defines over the prior art. Furthermore, as each of the remaining claims depends from Claim 1 while reciting additional features, Applicants further respectfully submit that the remaining claims likewise define over the prior art.

Applicants thus respectfully request that the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the

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Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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